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Statement submitted by International Presentation Association, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council*

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 30 and 31 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* The present statement is being issued without formal editing.

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Statement

International Presentation Association is present in twenty-two countries.

Sustainable development goals, targets and indicators must incorporate the existing international human rights normative framework. Human Rights are predicated on the ideal that all humans are born equal in rights and in dignity, where people are "right holders" and governments are "duty bearers". This ideal must constitute the beating heart of the sustainable development goals, giving them life and force.

Particular attention must be paid towards realising the rights of indigenous peoples with reference to the Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous People. Indigenous people need to be embraced as full partners in the sustainable development process, fully respecting the principle of free, prior and informed consent.

Recognising the significant role international migration plays in development, and framing migration policies which respect and protect human rights, must include the right to migrate. Taxes on migrant remittances must therefore be reduced.

In addressing extreme poverty and income inequalities, systemic issues such as tax evasion must be addressed through international cooperation in creating a just global tax ecosystem. Tax planning and tax evasion, which exploit weak provisions and tax havens, have contributed to the exploitation of developing nations — particularly that perpetrated by the extractive industries. Progressive taxation must help create level playing fields to reign in excessive wealth and extreme poverty.

On an international level, cancellation of debt for the least developed countries is necessary to stop the untenable drain of resources that servicing these debts inflicts. The benefits of debt cancellation transfer directly into promoting development, resulting in sustained investment in social programs to reduce poverty and improve quality of life. Debt cancellation requires an accompanying increase in the official development assistance commitment.

Sustainable development goals must be a government driven process where all actors are held accountable, including the private sector. Binding regulations based on The Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights must be enforced to ensure business practices and their effects are contributing positively to development and protection of human rights.

Putting people at the centre of development requires building their capacity to participate responsibly as partners in development. Universal social protection floors are a means of building this capacity, ensuring the right to gender-sensitive education, health, and provision of water and sanitation. Local communities should be encouraged to develop community based agriculture and small and medium sized businesses where people can regain ownership of the development process and be actors in effectively combating poverty.

Non-governmental organizations and civil society organisations are crucial partners in the implementation of the sustainable development goals and in the gathering of real disaggregated data at the grass roots level.